

Historic, Archive Document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

Advertising

BREEZE HILL NEWS

VOL. III

MARCH, 1938

No. 5

7407A

3/1/38

OFFICE COPY

BUDDLEIA

Charming



FEBRUARY, in 1938, showed life and promise in the Breeze Hill Gardens. Some pugnacious snowdrops sent up their white blooms weeks ago, there being no snow to prevent. The "spring" witch-hazel, *Hamamelis vernalis*, sent out its refined bloom in January, and is through, but the pussy willows of *Salix tetrapla* get whiter every day.

February has seen the indoor bloom of a unique book—"Garden Bulbs in Color"—published February 15 by The Macmillan Company. Put into words from personal contacts with most of the items in it by J. Horace McFarland, R. Marion Hatton, and Daniel J. Foley, all of the Mount Pleasant Press, this book of 275 lovely pictures, mostly in color, in its 296 pages makes a broad garden survey of the effective bulbs. It ought to go far!

But Breeze Hill has excitement in anticipating the bulb show getting ready just under ground, and indeed showing in adventurous tulip projections. Above ground, the new Breeze Hill label has just been placed so that actually "he who runs may read" the names of the fifty kinds of hyacinths, the multitude of new tulips, the rare daffodils, muscari, scillas, and the rest of the display of the best the *Algemeene Vereeniging voor Bloembollencultuur* (isn't that a name?) can do for us. Later we'll show you that new, permanent, unpatented, readable, and yet unobtrusive label in its job of indicating "Who's Who at Breeze Hill."

THE MOUNT PLEASANT PRESS is the father, mother, and sponsor of Breeze Hill Gardens. With the Gardens it becomes possible that here only, in all the earth (probably!), can a seed or a bulb or a plant be put through to growth, bloom, picturing, describing, ready for commercial showing and sale if it is good enough. The Press, through the J. Horace McFarland Company and The McFarland Publicity Service, develops good books, good catalogues, for the good and great of American horticulture in author, seedsman, and nurseryman. With tens of thousands of pictures and two generations of experience, it sets a world-pace of honest selling efficiency for roses, nursery items, bulbs, seeds, and the like. Ask it any questions that occur to you. Put to it your hard selling problems.



(SEE PAGE FOURTEEN)

HELLEBORUS NIGER

BUDDLEIA "CHARMING"

THIS beautiful Butterfly Bush, which won a Silver Medal from the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society at the 1937 Philadelphia Flower Show, was the outstanding plant introduced to American gardens in 1937.

Dreer sent us two plants of Charming last spring. Both were given shady positions; one in quite deep shade, the other on the north side of a large pear tree, where it received morning sun only. The plant in deep shade grew better and produced at least twice as many bloom-spikes as the other.

By the first of August our best plant was about 5 feet tall, and was producing 10-inch spikes of bloom so lovely that both photographers and artists were joining in our enthusiasm. The August color was a soft shade of pink-lavender, but my September notes read, "The color now is really pink, a soft rosy pink"—and the spikes were still 10 inches long.

Those 10-inch spikes of soft pink, each little flower brightened by the tiniest brownish orange eye, were just about as attractive as one could imagine a Buddleia would ever be, and the fragrance was also something to remember, as it was even sweeter and more intense than that of *Ile de France* or any of the other half-dozen outdoor Buddleias we have at Breeze Hill. The ultimate growth for 1937 was about 6 feet, each stem carrying three or four branches, and each tipped with a lovely fragrant flower-spike.

Established plants should start blooming in July, but the introducers recommend pinching off the first flower-spikes to aid in the development of side branches for an increased autumn bloom. However it is handled, we feel sure it will be very popular, for it is really a good thing.

Buddleias of this type may freeze pretty well down to the ground in northern gardens, but this does not matter, as they had better be cut down to the ground each spring anyway, unless one wants immense bushes. Half a bushel of peat moss or ashes dumped around the base of the plant in winter will insure the roots living over.—R. M. H.

BUDDLEIA "FORTUNE"

Another new Butterfly Bush which made good on its 1937 tryout was Wayside's variety, Fortune.

This proved to be a very moderate grower, and our plants did not make much over 4 feet of growth. This moderate habit is one of the virtues claimed for it by the introducers. The flower-spikes averaged from 8 to 10 inches long and were perfectly round. They were produced on 2-foot stems, and, like those of Charming, the florets practically all opened before the first ones began to turn brown. Flowers were a pleasing shade of lavender with the tiny eyes a rich burnt-orange. I noted a pleasant and not too strong fragrance.

Fortune should please owners of small gardens who have been embarrassed by the exuberant growth of the older varieties.—R. M. H.

A LATE CHRYSANTHEMUM

Usually after Jack Frost issues his orders to close up for the season, there is not much bloom to be found at Breeze Hill until the Christmas "roses" open their lovely white cups.

Last year we had the little Chrysanthemum-Azaleamum Royal Red to bridge this gap alone, and told about it in the January (1937) issue of Breeze Hill News. This year, when checking up after the cold had forced the gardeners inside for the winter, I found not only the Royal Red 'mum with flowers and foliage unharmed, but a grand plant of Aster Yunnanensis bearing a crop of flowers as fresh and bright as if frost were nothing but an idea!

This Aster is a native of Yunnan, China, and in good soil makes a bushy plant 2 to 2½ feet tall and at least half as broad, but in the light soil of our rock-garden is rarely over 1 foot tall, although the plants manage to put up at least a dozen stems each. The flowers, which have a mild spicy scent, are violet-blue Daisies, 1½ inches across, with two rows of petals around a ¾-inch brown and yellow button. They appear in clusters of 6 to 25.



AZALEAMUM ROYAL RED

We have had this Aster at Breeze Hill for more than ten years, having received the seed from England. We are not sure that it is obtainable in this country.

The Chrysanthemum Royal Red began blooming soon after the hard frosts of late October, and the hundreds of tiny, yellow-eyed, garnet flowers were still good to look at a month later; it was not until December 3 that the cold had finally caused their heads to droop and their brilliancy to ooze away.

The plant of Royal Red is ideal for the type of flower, being a roundish bushy affair about 18 to 20 inches tall, and around 2 feet across. Because of their color and the fact that the flowers are small, it does not have the appearance of being a solid mass of bloom like Amelia, but the bloom is plentiful, and the little red and yellow flowers, dotted against the small, attractively cut foliage, make even a prettier picture than if bloom were all one could see.

We hope the originators will be able to produce other colors of this important Chrysanthemum, as there are few varieties that can stand up to Jack Frost like this hardy little fellow.—R. M. H.

PHLOX

PROBABLY because of the more than normal well-distributed rainfall during 1937, Phlox at Breeze Hill were unusually good. True, the excessive humidity was favorable to fungous troubles, but disease was not any worse than in ordinary seasons, and the plants carried bloom later than usual.

In the salmon-pink shades, E. I. Farrington and Salmon Glow were just about as nice as Phlox could be; we had old clumps of both, and they put up dozens of flower-stems, furnishing fine heads of bloom for many weeks. In checking over the Phlox on September 20, I found Salmon Glow still in fine condition. Its rich salmon pips, at least $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches across, carry a whorl of white around a violet eye, which does not in the least detract from their beauty. The large flower-heads were nearly 4 feet above the ground, and the plants were healthy, as were those of E. I. Farrington, which reached about the same height. The florets were about the same size as those of Salmon Glow; the color was a lustrous salmon-pink around a good-sized cherry-red eye.

Daily Sketch, also a salmon-pink, was good, but the plants were younger and smaller. The salmon is not so obvious as in the former two; its eye is unusually large and of a bright cherry-red. Plants were free from rust, and look as though they would be strong growers another year.

In pink Phlox the hybridizers have a lot of work to do. Most of the varieties described as pink show too much blue. H. B. May seems to me to be as near a true pink as any of them, and as the florets are of better than average size, and the heads are good, it makes a fine appearance. It is not a tall grower—but we do not want all our Phlox of one size!

The patented Columbia is not a tall grower at Breeze Hill, rarely going over 2 feet, but it puts up a number of stems and blooms over a long season. With us the color is a warm pink with a bluish red halo around a white eye; the $1\frac{1}{4}$ -inch florets are loosely arranged in fair-sized heads. The foliage seemed to be of average health.

Although Dawn produced pleasing heads of light pink flowers, the foliage rusted badly. Yet it was promising enough for us to want to see older plants.

One of the loveliest in this group is Painted Lady, with its (or her!) loose heads of $1\frac{1}{4}$ -inch florets, clear light pink with a contrasting deep crimson eye—a strikingly beautiful flower. The $2\frac{1}{2}$ -foot plants developed some rust, but not enough to prevent bloom continuing into late September.

Just a shade darker than Dawn, but rusting badly like that variety, Pink Beauty gave us some very attractive heads of pink flowers of a fairly clear tone. The eye was not so pronounced as in most varieties.

With smaller florets than most of the modern varieties, the fine heads of pale pink of Rose Pearl have a dainty appearance that assures it a place. The first-year plants made 2-foot stems with little rust.

We were much pleased with the first-year performance of Ruth May, in spite of the fact that the lower foliage of the fairly tall plants did brown badly. It is late in coming into flower, but the plants were generous with bloom, the stems bearing small heads of $1\frac{1}{2}$ -inch florets of dainty pink with a large cherry eye. We have a feeling that second-year plants will show this to be one of the best.

In the darker shades, Charles B. Merrill produced large heads of medium-sized florets, deep pink with a lighter zone around a very bright cherry-red eye. The first-year plants were $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet tall, with broad, heavy foliage which showed a little rust.

Not having the faintest idea what color to expect in a flower described as orchid, we can only hope that our plants of Orchid Rose are true. The Breeze Hill coloring was a pleasing shade of light rose, with heads of good size and form; first-year plants were 2 feet tall. We were not excited.

On the other hand, R. P. Struthers is a newcomer to Breeze Hill we shall want to keep. Described as rich rose to salmon-pink, it was much darker at Breeze Hill, being somewhere between a light cerise and cherry-red. The florets were of only medium size, and there were few stalks per plant, but the color did not fade and the foliage remained healthy.

PHLOX
Progress





PHLOX
Augusta

We have but one of the pink suffruticosas, and until the color of this class is improved, one is enough. Miss Verboom and/or Pink Beauty (I believe they are the same thing) have been known as the pink Miss Lingard; our variety is Rosalinda, a newer introduction, and may be an improvement, as the color seemed to be a little clearer than, as we recall, was that of the other two. Of course, the foliage, being shiny and dark green, is more attractive than that of the decussata types, and the suffruticosas are valuable because they start to bloom in May. Rosalinda's $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch florets were pale rose in color.

In Phlox, the orange-scarlet shades are not as glaring as they are in some flowers, and are therefore worthy of a place in nearly any mixed planting. Unfortunately, there are but few varieties that can really qualify as being orange. On this account the lovely Saladin comes pretty near to being in a class by itself. Saladin's greatest drawback is the fact that it is a poor propagator; the clumps do not spread freely, so that there never seems to be enough plants to supply the demand. The plants are quite tall, and produce shapely heads of medium-sized florets of rich scarlet-orange. The foliage will rust if not protected.

Of not quite so rich a coloring, but very lovely, is Attraction. In some gardens it is scarlet-orange, in others the orange is nearer salmon. At any rate it is a fine Phlox, with unusually large florets and plants of medium height.

American Legion has to go somewhere, and as the mature coloring was reddish salmon, this seems to be a good place. The plants grew about $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet tall, putting up a number of stems with some rather nice heads of 1-inch florets of orange-scarlet, but this coloring soon softened to what was noted as reddish salmon. The notes do not mention any rust.

The introducers describe Tigress as being brilliant orange-scarlet. At Breeze Hill it was a dull scarlet; the orange seemed to be missing—maybe it is one of those baffling things that just won't stay put. A head of Tigress sent in for color records appeared to have enough orange in it to fall into the orange-scarlet class, but, when compared with the Ridgway color chart, the florets exactly matched his Tyrian

Rose. Our first-year plants did not make much growth; the foliage was healthy and the florets $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter.

When one looks over this list of what might be termed "red" varieties, there is trouble again, for most of them have some qualifying tint, so that it is difficult to know just how much latitude to take in and still have a red Phlox! One of the darkest at Breeze Hill is Aida, which does not get over 2 feet tall for us, the plants bearing small heads of medium-sized florets of a peculiar shade of amaranth-red, and coming into bloom in mid-July. There are people who profess an aversion to amaranth, considering it related to magenta, but isn't this just a pose? There is really nothing objectionable in either a light or a dark blue-red; true, they haven't the sparkle of clear colors, but Mother Nature uses them freely in decorating some of her choicest creations; so how do some of us get that way?

Of a clearer color, Wayside's new patented Augusta was checked as deep carmine-pink, with a slight orange flush around a purplish eye. The introducers call it cherry-red and say there is considerable orange at first; either description would do. The plant-growth was much like that of Columbia, with many stems branching freely from the base, barely 2 feet tall, and blooming right through from mid-July into October. Notes made September 20 showed the plants covered with bloom, and the fall color was real cherry-red. The foliage was healthy.

We are fond of the older Camillo Schneider, for while the florets are barely an inch in diameter and the heads are of only fair size, the color is brilliant scarlet-crimson, with an eye so faint that it is not noticeable. A newcomer to the garden last year was General Chanzy, whose medium-sized florets made $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet of height with clean foliage. It seems worth watching another year at least.

The last of our red family was the reliable Leo Schlageter, whose medium-sized florets of bright brick-red were really brilliant, and while the old plants were of only medium height, the foliage was better than average, and the color was real.

Although of a color that would not please everyone, Widar



LONICERA PILEATA. SEE PAGE FOURTEEN

and Nahatan gave a good account of themselves. While not at all recent, the reliable Widar is hard to beat. Rather low-growing but with splendid foliage, it has good heads of medium-sized violet-blue florets, a large white zone taking up about a third of each petal, making a really spectacular flower. Nahatan was somewhat similar in coloring, with impressive flowers $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter, in a shade of bluish rose or, possibly, pale amaranth, and, like Widar, with a white zone on the lower part of the petals. Neither of these two Phlox has the ordinary eye. Growth was up to $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet, with extra-large dark green rust-free foliage.

Familiar in this color-range is old Caroline Vandenberg, whose $2\frac{1}{2}$ -foot stems are good and strong, holding the fine heads stiffly upright. The color is clear violet-blue at first, with a yellowish eye which turns garnet as the flowers become a lighter lavender-blue. The foliage is not too good, but the plants do produce, and the color is unmatched among the novelties.

Although there have been a number of Phlox which were called blue, most of the blue had to be imagined. Search

for a blue Phlox was about as successful as that for a red perennial aster—the red of the asters contains too much blue and the blue of the Phlox too much red! However, Border Gem, described in catalogues as violet-blue, is, under some conditions, almost a bluish violet. The rest of the time it is deep purple, but whatever the color, it is a fine Phlox, with big heads of large flowers on medium-height plants.

At Breeze Hill we rather feel that we have at last found a Phlox which really makes one think of the color blue. Its name is Progress, and it came to us from Frederic J. Rea, a Phlox specialist of Norwood, Massachusetts. Our plants were set out in late spring, 1936, and in 1937 were $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet high. Each clump made numerous stems, carrying broad foliage which did not show any signs of rust until late September. The florets are just about $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches across, in heads of good size, which from a distance look like heads of slaty blue. The color at first is a shade of violet-blue, but it slowly changes to steel-blue, at which stage it is quite distinct. An attractive garnet eye holds its color throughout the life of the flower. It is so good, and can be used in so many places, that we want several more clumps around the garden.

We have but two white Phlox at present at Breeze Hill. The lovely Mrs. Jenkins is all over the place because it is so dependably good. Invariably the clumps are $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet tall and are covered with masses of snowy white, the good-sized heads being composed of florets $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches in diameter; and as it blooms all summer and through September, we feel that the white section is well taken care of. Nevertheless we do have a few plants of Miss Lingard, kept for its attractive foliage as much as for the flowers. Supposed to bloom from May through October, here it does not have a much longer season than Mrs. Jenkins. However, it is valuable for its somewhat earlier bloom and its good foliage.

Maid Marian, in the lavender shades, furnishes as many blooms as any Phlox we have, and although the flowers are little over an inch in diameter, and the heads are quite airy, there are so many of the dainty florets that the tall plants are a sheet of lavender for a long time.—R. M. H.

LONICERA PILEATA

Filling the V at the junction of two paths is a fine specimen of a rarely seen evergreen, *Lonicera pileata*. A stranger would never guess that this lovely plant is a member of the honeysuckle family; instead of being a vine or a bush, *L. pileata* is a prostrate shrub some 10 to 12 inches high and with a spread of at least 4 feet. The oblong-lanceolate leaves, less than an inch long, are lustrous, dark green above, and smooth pale green below. They are in opposite pairs, and stand out stiffly at right angles to the stem, so perfectly placed that a branch laid on a flat surface would have every leaf touching the surface, whether the branch was face up or face down. Each pair of leaves is spaced about $\frac{5}{8}$ inch distant from the next pair. There is a steady increase in the length of the leaves from base to tip, the pair at the tip of a branch being almost twice the length of those at the base.

The fuzzy-covered branches, 1 to 2 feet in length, stand out stiffly horizontal, flexible, but as alive as a steel spring. Its fragrant whitish flowers come in pairs in early spring, and are followed by translucent purple fruits. Our plant is thriving in rather acid soil.—R. M. H.

THE "CHRISTMAS" ROSE

Although *Helleborus niger* is, in the books, said to bloom from December to March, at Breeze Hill bloom begins in November, sometimes in late October, producing an unbroken succession of flowers for several weeks. Then, after a rest, they break out again in early March about as lustily as they did in the fall. But when there is an open winter like this last one, they bloom all winter. The spring flowers are smaller than the first bloom. My notes say that they are not much over half as large, but memory says they are only about a third smaller. At any rate, they are lovely flowers, regardless of their size or when they appear, and they do appear when bloom is scarce and precious.

The Hellebore flowers come on 10- to 12-inch naked stems, with five sepals around a mass of yellow stamens nestling in the bottom of the informally shaped saucer. In form the flowers roughly resemble an anemone; they start with purplish tints on the bud, but go through a period of pure white, until fully open, and it is at this time that they are at their loveliest. Next tints of purple steal slowly over the white until from a distance the bloom appears pink; finally as the succulent petals (or in reality, sepals) begin to dry up, they turn pale green, ending their long life at nearly the same shade as the underside of the foliage. There is a peculiar haunting scent that is not really a fragrance, but is yet very pleasant. The single palmately formed leaf on its 6-inch petiole is quite interesting, as it is divided into irregular lobes toothed only on the outer portions. The color is dark blackish green above and pale olive below, something like that of a rhododendron.

The plant is indifferent to temperature, but does look discouraged in snow, resuming its independent expression when the snow leaves.

The Christmas Rose is about as easy to grow as any shade-loving flower we have, and blooming as it does, when all the rest of our floral world is resting, it can well be considered one of our most valuable flowering plants.

A well-grown plant will produce over a hundred flowers during the fall and winter bloom period, at which time the center of the plant is a closely packed tangle of bloom stems in various stages of development.

Its demands are easily satisfied. The partial shade it requires can be found in almost every garden. A bed made rich with manure, leaf-mold, sand and good garden loam in equal parts, will build up thrifty plants. Water is needed in generous quantities; so try to remember the plants during the hot, dry days of midsummer.

Increase is by seed or division, the latter method being particularly successful in either late April or late August; spring divisions give considerable bloom the following winter.

Incidentally, this Hellebore is an excellent cut-flower when brought into the house.—R. M. H.



PHLOX

SEE PAGE SIX

Salmon Glow